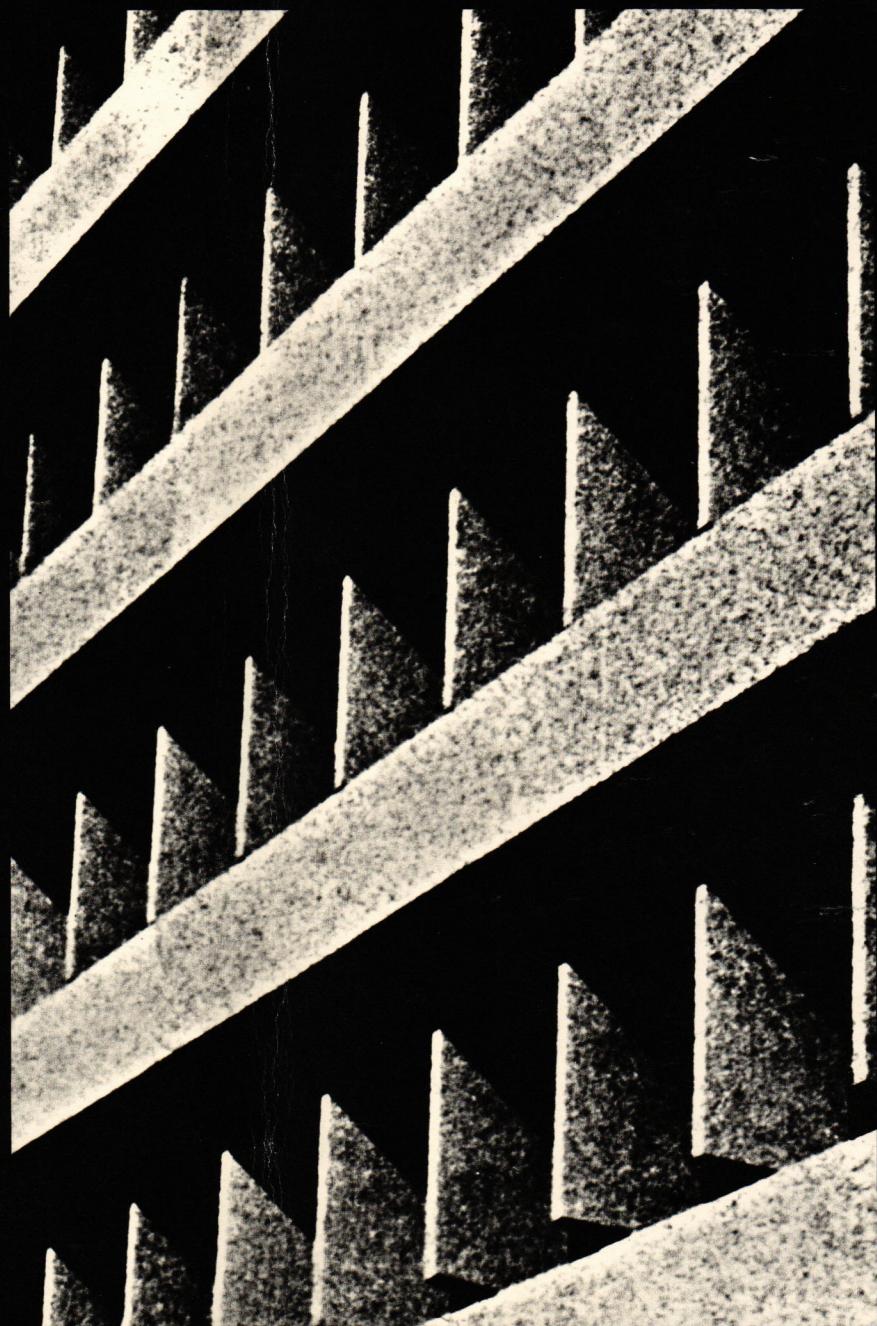


Report of the President 1970



Report of the President / Lloyd H. Elliott / March 1970

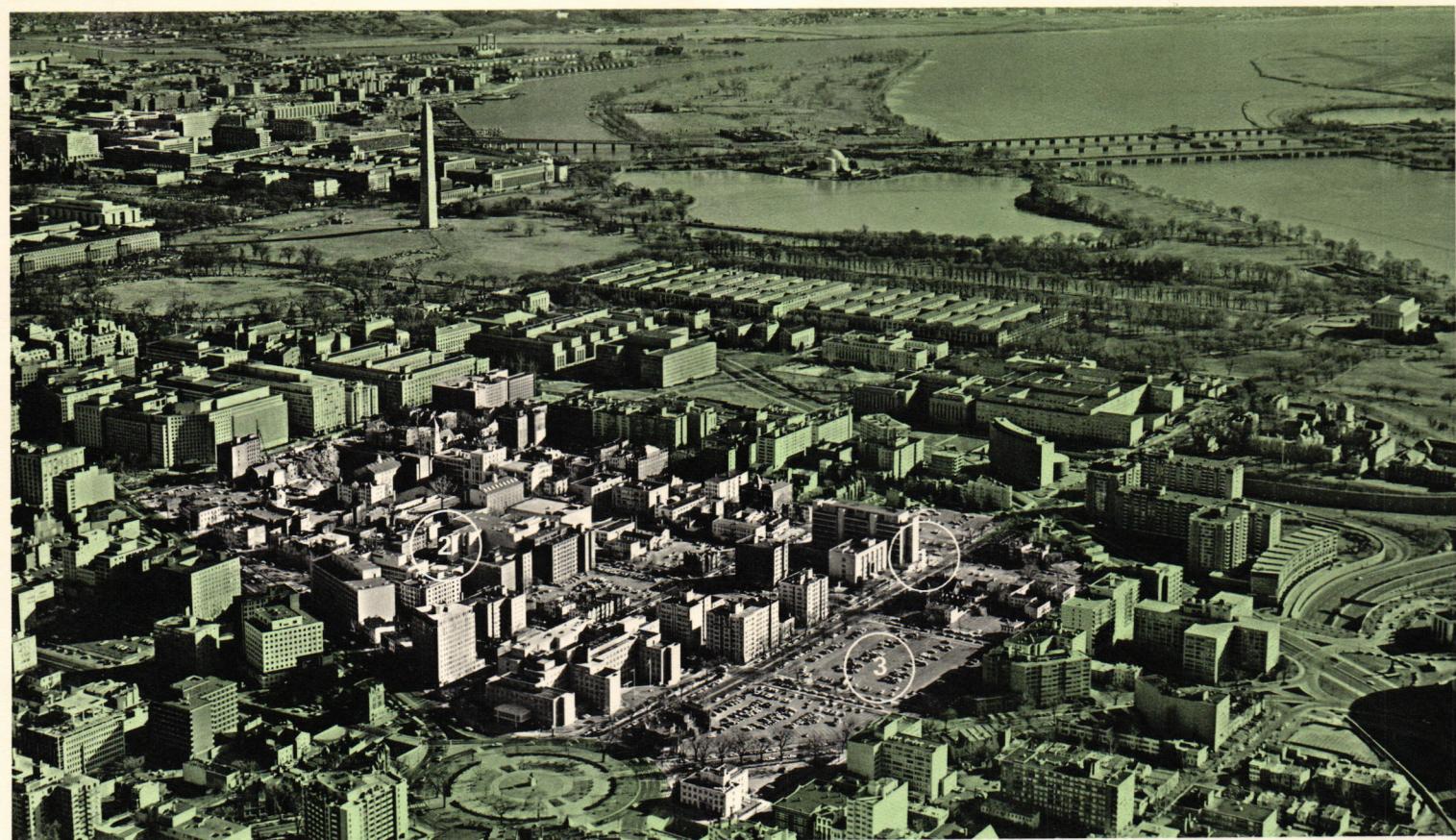


President and Mrs. Elliott with students

1 New Classroom Building 2 University Center 3 Site of New Medical School



The George Washington University/Washington, D.C.



"...the liberal arts... is perhaps the most misunderstood, misapplied, and oversold realm of study in higher education."

Higher education always seems to have at least one crisis on hand. A few years ago one of the more prominent was the Crisis of the Liberal Arts. It followed, was even bred of, the Crisis in Science, which itself had followed the orbit of Sputnik. The fear was that both funds and bright students were being massively diverted from the humanities into the hard sciences; the implication was that we would raise a generation of uncultured technocrats. Whatever the reality of that liberal arts crisis, there have been and continue to be misrepresentations of the liberal arts, most often practiced by those of us who are its most ardent supporters. While these misrepresentations have gone largely unnoticed, very likely they have played a large part in helping to create the conditions for the present educational turmoil. To try to disentangle what the liberal arts is from what it is not is to raise questions with implications for both national educational policy and educational policy and practice at George Washington University—questions and implications which must be clarified and resolved if we are to shape a progressive future out of the confusions of the '60s.

The liberal arts has been, and largely still is, considered the spine in the anatomy of most universities. Yet in spite of the long

tradition of the liberal arts and its substantial following, it is perhaps the most misunderstood, misapplied, and oversold realm of study in higher education. While the day of the "gentleman's C," a grade that implied a certain intelligence under minimal strain, is past, the liberal arts is still used as a kind of academic way station for those between adolescence and adulthood. Professors, administrators, parents, and politicians have strongly urged study of the liberal arts on the young who are uncertain of their interests, not yet ready to select a life's work, or not strongly motivated in one particular direction or another—those who ought to get away from home for a few years in order to mature or are simply fed up with the limitations of neighborhood or home town. The liberal arts has been urged on those too young and economically insecure for marriage, those who have already caused their parents more worry than they can stand, those who face such unhappy alternatives as the vagaries of the draft and the unavailability of constructive and satisfying work.

The liberal arts was never meant to solve any, much less all, such personal problems, nor was it meant to solve the larger problems of a given society at a given time. Yet we have all but said the former and often implied the latter. In our speeches, in our publications, in public and in private, we have

". . . a contributing cause [of student rebellion] is surely what the young see as hypocrisy, a failure to deliver on our rhetoric."

unconsciously pedaling the liberal arts as if it were academic snake oil. We have sold and oversold the liberal arts in a genteel and, on occasion, eloquent fashion, but those successes have helped create the conditions for failure. The failure may be individual, as in the case of the freshman who leaves college frustrated and angry. Not seeing any other practical alternative, he entered the university perhaps unmotivated or having his real motivations stifled. He was told, maybe superficially convinced, that he would be rounded out, filled up, or otherwise made fit for the adult world. The plain fact is, of course, that colleges and universities change students very little. Perhaps a student's intellectual direction can be changed, but it is rare that a university changes his temperament or character. And, despite our rhetoric, we do not routinely produce contemporary versions of the Renaissance man. So by Thanksgiving the confused freshman may well be on the way to academic frustration and possible failure, complicated by an overwhelming sense of personal disorientation.

Individual failure is a kind of silent rebellion. Overt student rebellion has many and varied causes, but a contributing cause is surely what the young see as hypocrisy, a failure to deliver on our rhetoric. And descriptions of the liberal arts are usually well larded with

rhetoric. We perhaps delude ourselves as well, for if pressed we would acknowledge that we are talking about an ideal of the liberal arts, not about what goes on at some 11 o'clock lecture, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Two student complaints about undergraduate (mostly liberal arts) education stand out. First, that most of the subjects in it are not relevant and, second, that taken as a whole it is "careerist." These two charges would seem to be contradictory when taken at face value. What seems to be meant by "careerist" is that the liberal arts, and especially the crowning B.A., is first and foremost a ticket to the adult world of business, government, and the professions. This complaint seems not to be a criticism of content—at least in the liberal arts—so much as a criticism of purpose. Students may feel they have been put on a straight track they cannot get off, having been told that only the destination is of importance, not the quality of the trip or what might be interesting along the way.

The question of the relevance of the liberal arts is more difficult. If we accept as a definition of relevance "that which is both contemporary and immediately applicable," there is no choice but to agree that in large part the liberal arts are not relevant. There is nothing exactly one can "do" with a knowledge of Thucydides, Swift, and de

"... what seems relevant today may be less so tomorrow and vice versa."

"... more kinds of real alternatives must be available to the young . . ."

Toqueville. Under the restrictive definition of relevance, the description of the fall of Athens, or incisive political and literary satire, or the first comprehensive analysis of the American character are all irrelevant. Yet if relevance is to be elevated to an educational concept, it must be acknowledged that what seems relevant today may be less so tomorrow and vice versa. One can imagine a student of the 1950's who was advised to put aside his interest in an aquarium he had developed, maintained, and informally studied for a more earnest pursuit of curricula then advertised as relevant. A decade later, however, it seems apparent that the deteriorating state of the environment requires specialists trained across the whole spectrum of pollution analysis and control. The aquarium that seemed childish earlier might have naturally led the student into just those fields of study so badly needed now.

No matter how the concept of relevance might be construed, it still remains clear that study of the liberal arts is no personal or educational panacea, and it is not only misleading but potentially cruel to say or imply that it is. In a time when the young are maturing at an increasingly earlier age, both physically and intellectually, if not always emotionally, and in a time when knowledge is increasing faster than the ability of any

school or schools to institutionalize its study, more kinds of real alternatives must be available to the young. These alternatives must include opportunities for enrollment in a greater variety of educational institutions and for real and productive work and service.

In education, choices can be made to establish more and different kinds of institutions rather than to attempt to appropriate to existing schools—especially liberal arts schools—every field of knowledge in sight. The community college, unencumbered as yet by excessive tradition or rhetoric, is proving to be one of the most responsive institutions, and its promise should be supported. Part of the success of the community colleges' growth is born out of the limitations of four-year institutions, which are now under great pressure to meet society's demands, demands they simply cannot meet with their limited resources. With moral and financial commitments already made to both faculty and to programs, most liberal arts colleges can accommodate honors programs, independent study, interdisciplinary courses, and other progressive procedures much more easily than they can accommodate new departments, new educational action programs, or a whole reordering of their purposes. There is no doubt that society has immediate problems which education combined with action

"New institutions are needed which would be accepted and recognized in their own right for the services they could perform."

"... the idealism of the young in combination with their physical strength and adaptability could become a potent force in solving those problems to which the young are most sensitive."

can help resolve. The broadly based community college seems best able to fill such needs, and where a college or university is not filling them, the establishment of a community college or comparable institution may be a far better answer than trying to enlarge the purposes of existing institutions.

While American education has always been noted for its diversity, at no time has the full flowering of that diversity been so essential. New institutions are needed which would be accepted and recognized in their own right for the services they could perform. Service institutions are needed at the neighborhood level, where programs of nutrition, child care, and health can become part of the community's fabric—where the old can renew their sense of belonging and participation; where the extension of education is available to learners at all levels; where community improvement can be tied to community education; and where those genuinely committed to progress will have a base from which to work. Teaching institutions are needed where admission is open to adults of all ages; where both part-time and full-time students can find opportunity for independent study, remedial work, or cultural exploration; and where vocational advancement can be had at low cost. Research institutions are needed at local, state, and national levels where work on various

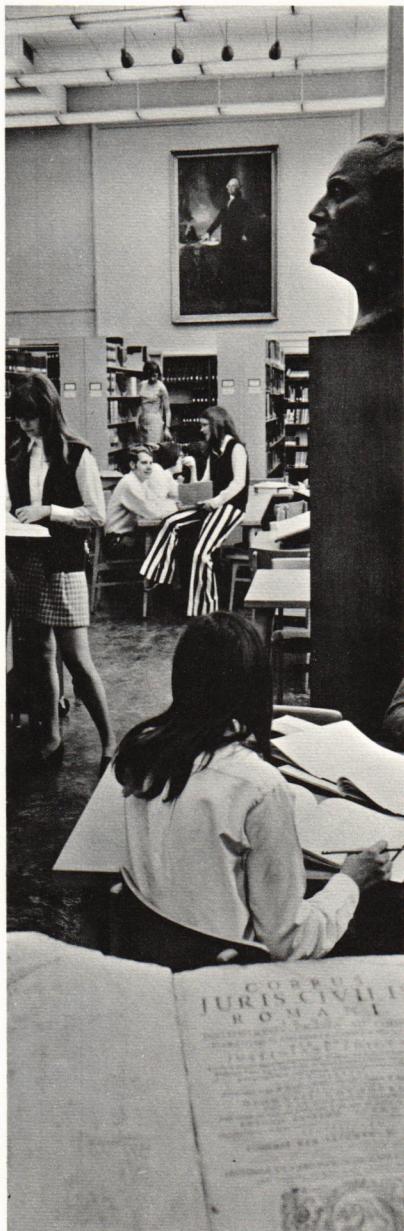
problems, both immediate and long range, can be pursued without the overhead costs inherent in present universities and without the press of teaching and administrative duties. Until and unless such new institutions are within easy geographical and financial reach of the citizenry, programs in the liberal arts will continue to serve as the scapegoats for an inadequate educational system.

As changes are needed in higher education to offer a greater variety of opportunity so, also, are changes needed in the framework of society at large to permit more flexibility in both *when* and *how* young men and women follow their interests and assume their responsibilities to themselves and to society. The young man graduating from high school may face what for him are three unhappy choices. Perhaps psychologically exhausted from 12 years of schooling, he wants to go out to experience the "real" world but faces the draft on one hand and the door of the personnel office shut to anything but menial work on the other. So he may go to college frustrated and ripe for either cynicism or open revolt. This is a double waste, for the idealism of the young in combination with their physical strength and adaptability could become a potent force in solving those problems to which the young are most sensitive.

"When zeal remains untempered by sweat, it often turns to acrimony."

Young men and women, following high school graduation or at some time before reaching 25 years of age, should have the opportunity to give two years' service to any of a wide range of national and local projects aimed at improving education, health, housing, and other basics of living for less fortunate citizens. A domestic service corps would not only help provide a better life for more Americans, it would also provide more avenues to effective participation for younger adults. As it is now, there is little chance to learn early through personal experience either the toughness of social problems or the power of individual efforts. If a person has no chance to test himself on difficult problems, it is easy to blame injustice on others. When zeal remains untempered by sweat, it often turns to acrimony. Young Americans are alert to social ills; it is only logical to try to provide the machinery by which they may be part of the solution—not part of the problem.

Programs such as these will be enormously expensive. But one way or another we shall pay for them, and money is a far cheaper price to pay than living in a society increasingly characterized by cynicism, frustration, hate, and despair.





Because new educational alternatives are needed, there is a temptation to say that George Washington University, organized in the traditional model of a liberal arts college, dovetailed with graduate and professional schools, should transform itself into one of the alternatives. To do so, however, would be to throw the educational baby out with the bathwater. While there is a need to provide alternatives, they must be alternatives to something.

Which brings us back to the liberal arts, misunderstood, misapplied, and oversold though they may be. Of the general characteristics of the liberal arts, one is especially to the point—that is, the study of human endeavor, of the human condition, of human institutions as they operate over human history. Without this sense of time the present can be seen only as chaos. By doing better what it does best, and by testing and adopting the most promising innovative programs and courses, the University can attempt to make the past and present serve the future. In the past year there have been a number of developments at George Washington, both in the liberal arts and in the graduate and professional schools, which suggest that within the limits of its resources, the University can be responsive to current needs without sacrificing its responsibility to its traditional role.

The search for educational relevance is best served when teaching, learning, research, and community service reinforce each other. A promising example was begun at the undergraduate level of GW in 1969 under the title of the GW-Washington Project. Independently funded, its primary aim is to stimulate and develop curricula and programs that will be appropriate to the University and useful to the Washington community. The long-range objective is to promote curricular change and development in this regard throughout the University, especially at the undergraduate level. Aspects of the Project include: a work-study program combining student work in community organizations with faculty-supervised study; encouragement of research that bears on community needs in as direct a way as possible; the seeking of cooperation among departments in the development of curricula and in the coordination of University resources; and a new course, "Experimental Humanities," which includes field study of a wide range of topics of community concern, followed the second semester by selected field projects.

While the notion of what the liberal arts encompasses has expanded, it has also become clear that many fields of knowledge interlock and, given a specific context, can be brought to bear in mutual concert. The complex field of urban studies is

THE STUDENT POPULATION (Fall, 1969)

On Campus:	14,556
Off Campus:	6,776
Total:	<u>21,332</u>

ON-CAMPUS DISTRIBUTION

5,487	Undergraduates (2,739 men, 2,748 women)
6,701	Graduates and First Professional
2,368	Nondegree
<u>14,556</u>	
7,616	Full-time
6,940	Part-time
<u>14,556</u>	

GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN

50	states
92	countries
	District of Columbia

DEGREES AWARDED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1968-69

10	Associate Degrees
1,374	Bachelor's Degrees
1,656	Master's Degrees
110	Doctor's Degrees
308	Juris Doctor Degrees
94	Doctor of Medicine Degrees
<u>3,552</u>	Total

"Citizens' groups in several areas of Washington have already requested and are now receiving assistance in dealing with such problems as noise, traffic, housing, recreation, and health needs."

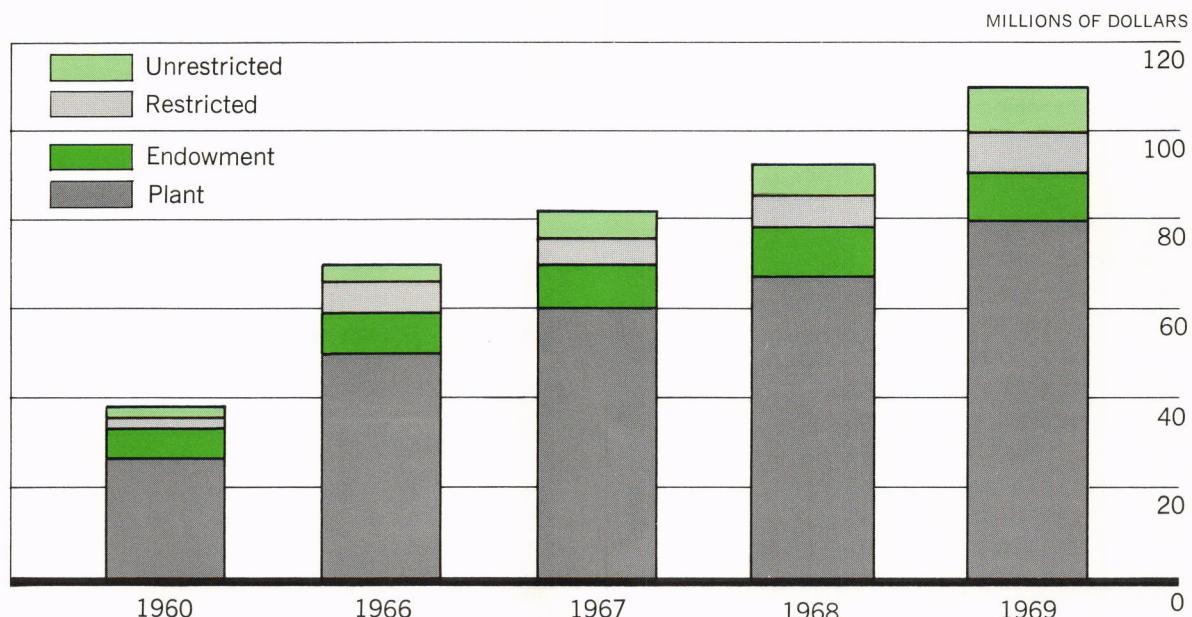
such a context. During 1969 the School of Public and International Affairs established a concentrated academic program for undergraduate majors in urban affairs, which combines courses from six departments. At the graduate level the School of Government and Business Administration established the Urban and Regional Planning Department, which offers a two-year program. The Department has already been awarded a \$150,000 three-year grant from the Richard K. Mellon Charitable Trust for fellowships for graduate study and joint projects with community groups in the inner city. Project emphasis will be on cooperative activities with graduate students in other degree programs, such as the Urban Law Institute and the departments of Health Care Administration and Epidemiology and Environmental Health. Citizens' groups in several areas of Washington have already requested and are now receiving assistance in dealing with such problems as noise, traffic, housing, recreation, and health needs.

It is often at the graduate and professional level where the analytical powers and background developed through study in the liberal arts can be applied in conjunction with more specialized knowledge to have direct effect on current problems. In medicine, for example, the rising costs of medical care and

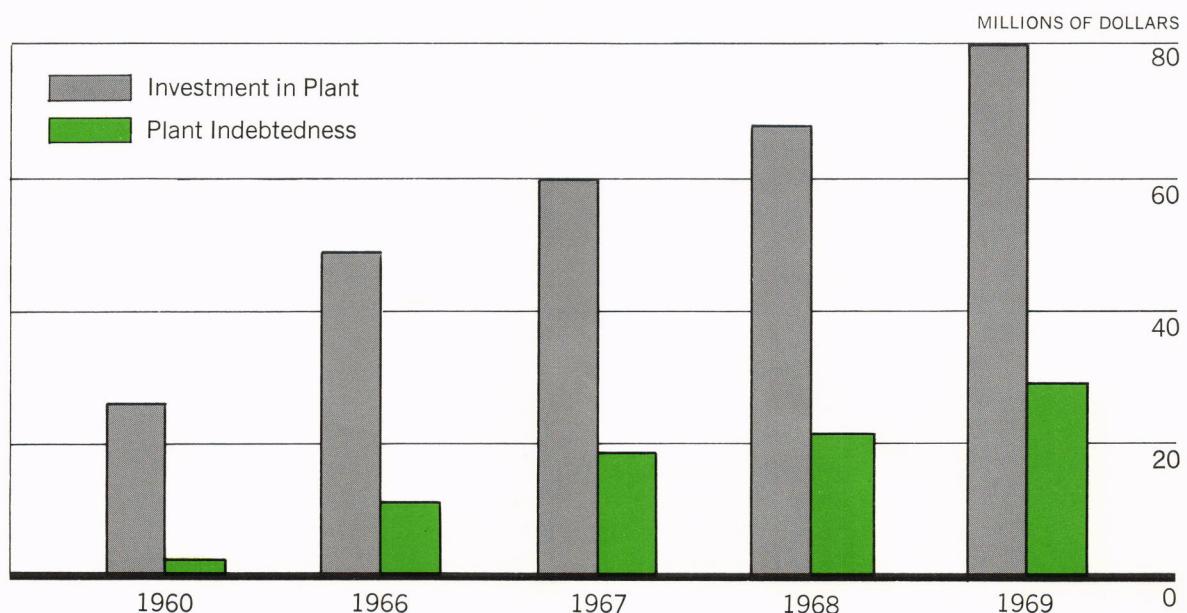
medical education, the tendency for the doctor/patient relationship to become more mechanical and less personal, and, for the layman, the often bewildering profusion of specialists he may have to consult are problems increasingly familiar to all. Among important developments at GW in medicine, last April The Medical Center opened a new University Clinic in a fully renovated 13-story building on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Clinic is providing a facility for the improvement of medical education, for the extension of research, and for more personal medical care. A computerized system for examining patients not only accelerates diagnostic procedures but frees the physician from time-consuming routine to better concentrate on his patients' individual problems. With other specialists available in one location, the physician can more effectively orchestrate the treatment of his patients without losing personal contact and often without having to inconvenience patients by referring them to a number of different locations. The setting is also of great value to medical students who are able to observe and, as they progress in their education, assist in a wide variety of clinical situations.

In the National Law Center it is also possible to point to programs where teaching, learning, research, and service converge to each

GROWTH OF FUND ASSETS for fiscal years 1960-1969



INVESTMENT IN PLANT at end of fiscal year based on original cost



“...the Urban Law Institute has had success in the search for legal remedies to help ameliorate some of the conditions of inner-city existence.”

“Two interdisciplinary institutes [represent] a coordinated effort to make technology serve man rather than dominate him.”

others' mutual benefit. For example, the recently created Urban Law Institute has had success in the search for legal remedies to help ameliorate some of the conditions of inner-city existence. The Institute helps fulfill the need for lawyers trained in poverty law. One of two in the nation, the program is supported by funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity and combines academic training in poverty law with field work in the inner city, where its students, some of whom are VISTA lawyers, serve as “corporate counsel” to citizens' groups. Such activity has helped residents establish a consumer-owned and operated supermarket; secure loans from the Small Business Administration to establish more than half a dozen minority-owned businesses; and make headway in the field of housing, especially in improved maintenance and in gaining compliance with housing code regulations. The Institute has also, among other activities, designed and organized seminars on individual rights and has devised a curriculum unit on consumer law at the junior high school level which is now being taught in District of Columbia schools.

In recognition of an age in which technology threatens to proliferate more quickly than our ability to control it, the School of Engineering and Applied Science, which has been thoroughly

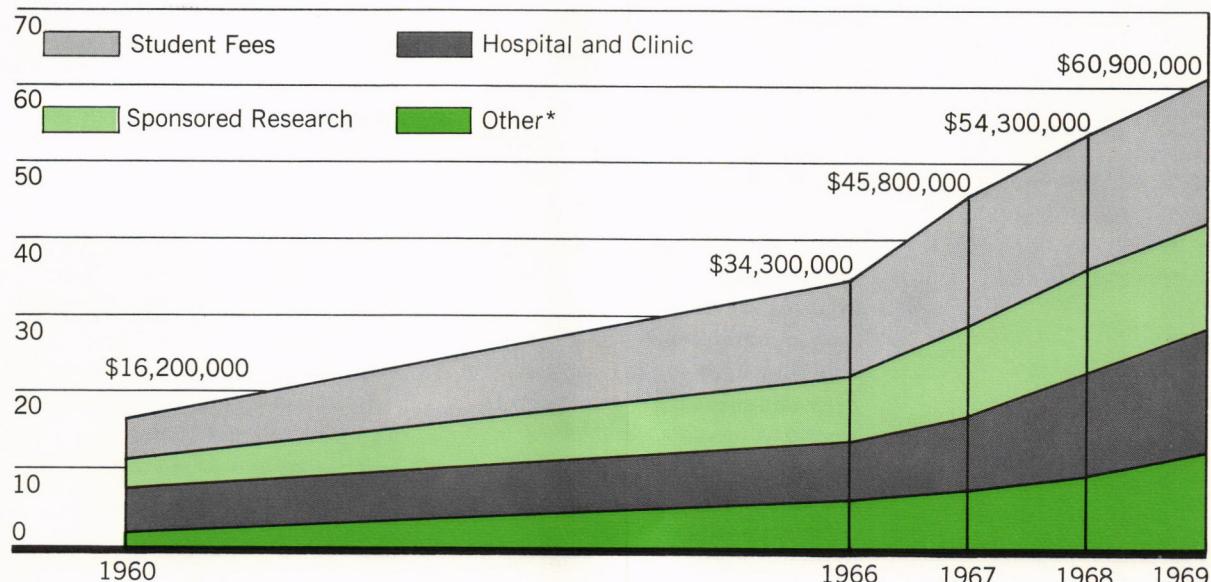
revitalized through the addition of new faculty, programs, and equipment, has inaugurated two interdisciplinary institutes: one in Management Science and Engineering, to define and develop new techniques to manage technology; the other, for the Study of Fatigue and Structural Reliability, to understand, develop, and control the advancement of technology. Both draw on faculty in mathematics, economics, statistics, systems analysis, and materials and computer sciences in a coordinated effort to make technology serve man rather than dominate him.

This sampling of new programs is not an exhaustive list. Nor is it possible to assuredly predict the final success of any of them. But when considering innovative programs, we should not overlook a fundamental point. Successful innovation is possible precisely when the reservoir of talent and knowledge developed carefully over time through existing faculties, courses, and programs is available as both a resource for progress and a standard against which progress may be measured.

Any educational premise, developed into a program and put into practice, is finally contingent on the University's ability to pay for it. Private universities with small endowments like George Washington are especially vulnerable to the syndrome of, on

INCOME

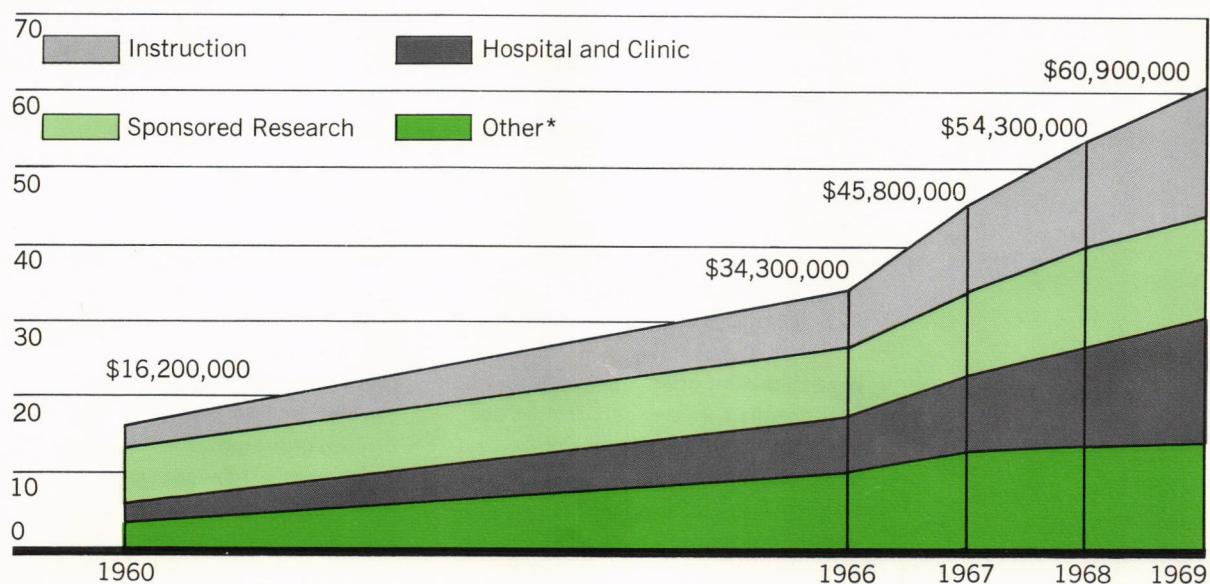
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS



*Includes endowment income, gifts, student activities and auxiliary enterprises.

EXPENSES AND TRANSFERS

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS



*Includes administration, maintenance and operation of plant, student activities, auxiliary enterprises and transfers to other funds.

"... it is increasingly necessary that GW and similar institutions develop a more accurate way in which to match resources to educational objectives."

the one hand, inflationary pressures and, on the other, general reductions in the amount of federal funds available for research and other educational projects. In spite of these conditions it is encouraging to report that the University's financial position has been improved through a combination of private giving, federal grants, and agreement for development of another University property on Pennsylvania Avenue. Total gifts received during the past year amounted to \$3,497,727, a 22 per cent increase over the previous year (a graphic display of the University's financial development is offered on pages 10 and 12). The Annual Support Program, now incorporated as part of the George Washington University Fund, surpassed its \$500,000 goal by \$107,748, and the Luther Rice Society, recently created for donors of \$1,000 or more, announced gifts and pledges in excess of \$5,000,000. The University also extended a long-range program to develop its Pennsylvania Avenue frontage for the purpose of contributing to the educational program. A long-term agreement has been made with the Potomac Electric Power Company whereby GW will construct an eight-story office building in the block bounded by 19th, 20th, and H Streets, and Pennsylvania Avenue to be leased to PEPCO for 30 years. The agreement will provide a substantial contribution toward

the cost of the new library building, a first-priority construction project. The lease also provides for an annual net income, which after the 30th year will be the equivalent of an investment return on an endowment of approximately \$40 million.

A special tribute is due trustees, medical alumni, and friends who, over an eight-month period, raised and contributed in pledges and gifts more than \$4,000,000 toward the School of Medicine Building Fund. This, added to other Medical Center assets, enabled GW to secure a \$15,300,000 federal grant toward the construction, which seems likely to begin by mid-1970.

As encouraging as improvements in the University's financial position are, it is increasingly necessary that GW and similar institutions develop a more accurate way in which to match resources to educational objectives. While a business may be said to be successful if it maximizes profit over a certain period of time, there is no such precise criterion for the success of a university. Most of a university's "profits" are realized in the lives of its alumni and in the contributions it makes through research and the extension of knowledge. The majority of such "profits" are not returned in a manner that can be translated into a financial gain for the university. A promising method of university "accounting" has been established

"Just as priorities must be set for national educational policy, so must [GW] shape the desirable out of the possible."

at GW through a \$163,000 Ford Foundation grant. The techniques being developed in planning, programming, and budgeting will enable GW to re-examine all programs and proposed programs in terms of need, cost, and relationship to the University's various divisions and in light of the University's total objectives. As the methods and machinery are fully developed, University administrators will have rapid access to a variety of information—information that will make sensible decision-making easier. As a result, the University will soon be more fully equipped to choose from alternative ways of using available funds and better able to determine which programs should be initiated, modified, expanded, or terminated.

During the past year at George Washington University, progress on the educational and financial fronts has evolved from a consciousness of the past fused with a vision of the future. Given unlimited ability to see the future and unlimited funds to experiment, perhaps the University could do all demanded of it. Yet the most cursory examination of the history of human institutions suggests that is unlikely. Just as priorities must be set for national educational policy, so must George Washington University shape the desirable out of the possible. The process continues.



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